Information Link

A Source of Information for Our Customers

ITD's Chief Information Officer Curtis L. Wolfe Retires

Curtis L. Wolfe

Curtis L. Wolfe, North Dakota's Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the Information Technology Department (ITD), recently announced plans to retire from his position effective December 31, 2005, after serving six years for the department. Curt, who was appointed to CIO by former Governor Ed Schafer in October 1999, became the state's first CIO for the department and again was re-appointed as CIO when Governor John Hoeven was elected as the state's next Governor in 2000. ITD Deputy CIO Mike Ressler will act as the interim CIO until the Governor appoints a new CIO to the position, which is expected to occur in February.

While Curt was at ITD, he led the department to accomplish many great things in technology, from leading Information Technology (IT) initiatives to forecasting a future vision for North Dakota. Curt believes, "Traditional government is based on physical boundaries. The new electronic government transcends boundaries and has forever transformed the way government and customers access services." With the help of Curt's vision and leadership, North Dakota has elevated itself today to the cutting edge of technology. In a 2001 study conducted by Gartner, a leading technology research firm, North Dakota ranked eighth in the nation for digital democracy, up from 38 previously, and earned the honor of becoming the most improved state. Projects like STAGEnet and Connect North Dakota (ConnectND) have greatly expanded the state's digital capabilities and opened the doors to many new business opportunities. Both initiatives have proven beneficial to state agencies, k-12, higher education, local governments, and citizens.

Some of Curt's accomplishments include:

- Successfully directing the deployment of the statewide broadband network serving education and state and local government;

- Implementing H323 IP video to address distant learning needs of k-12 to provide anytime, anywhere

education in a most cost efficient way;

- Initiating several application service provider models such as the Geographical Information Service (GIS), a geospatial data and information hub; Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS), a hub created to share offender and criminal justice information from participating entities; ConnectND, the state's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution, making North Dakota the first in the nation to integrate the university system and government into a seamless administrative computer network; and k-12 Power School, which expanded the state's network to provide more powerful internet connections and video conferencing throughout the state;

- Directing the IT consolidation efforts as directed by the state legislature;

- Directing efforts to standardize desktop PCs for office automation; and finally,

- Setting strategic IT direction for the state in finding ways that IT can support education and economic development.

- In 2003, Curt was recognized as one of the business world's Premier 100 IT leaders by IGD's *ComputerWorld*, a top IT trade publication. This award recognizes exceptional technology leadership, innovative approaches to business challenges, and effective execution of comprehensive IT strategies.

Curt brought more than 20 years of IT experience with him from the private sector to the State of North Dakota. Curt's IT career kicked off in 1974 when he began a consulting firm, Wolfe and Associates, originally based in Alaska and later in New Mexico, which specialized in system planning and acquisition, custom application development, telecommunications network consulting, and IT audits. He sold the firm in 1996 to SOS Staffing Services and then became president of its IT Division. It was during this time Curt became connected to North Dakota. In the mid-90's, Curt completed several IT studies for the state. In 1999, the legislature lifted the former Information Services Divisions (ISD) from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to a cabinet agency called ITD, to be led by a CIO, appointed by the Governor. Following this change in structure, Curt was chosen to lead this new venture.

The position of CIO carries the responsibilities of overseeing ITD and everything it administers, including developing a secure state-wide area network for voice, data, video, and multi-media for the agencies and citizens of North Dakota. The CIO also resides as the chairman of the State Information Technology Advisory Committee (SITAC), a committee that advises ITD on the planning and implementation of the state's network, and serves as a chair of the Educational Technology Council (ETC), a council responsible for coordinating the development and use of technology in education.

2004-2005 Annual Report Released
Mike Ressler

ITD continues to be focused on providing "excellent" IT services with "excellent" customer service.

The Information Technology Department (ITD) recently published the organization's 2004-2005 Annual Report, titled *Customer-Centric*, highlighting the department's activities for the time period.

ITD has been and will continue to be focused on providing "excellent" IT services with "excellent" customer service. ITD recently adopted an IT service management best practice model called Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL). This model consists of practices drawn from public and private organizations internationally. There are 10 modules that define ITIL, but the department will focus on four of them to start with.

They are:

1. Incident Management: the implementation of standard time frame for incident and problem response.

2. Change Management: a standardized approach to implementing a change in a program or a system in an effort to assure maximum efficiency and protecting the integrity of other systems.

3. Problem Management: the evaluation and resolution of the root cause of a problem.

4. Service Level Management: documentation provided to the customer regarding the service levels and systems availability of the services offered.

The report also highlights ITD's major services, the dollars spent for those services by the larger agencies, and a comparison of the rates ITD charges versus other providers of similar services. The report recognizes ITD's service rates were less than or equal to those compared this past year. IT projects completed in 2004-2005 by ITD or coordinated by ITD are summarized in the Executive Highlights section.

ITD presents the Annual Report to the State Information Technology Advisory Committee (SITAC), Legislative IT Committee, the Legislative Audit and Fiscal Review Committee and the Budget Section.

An electronic copy of the 2004-2005 Annual Report can be found at www.nd.gov/itd/pubs.
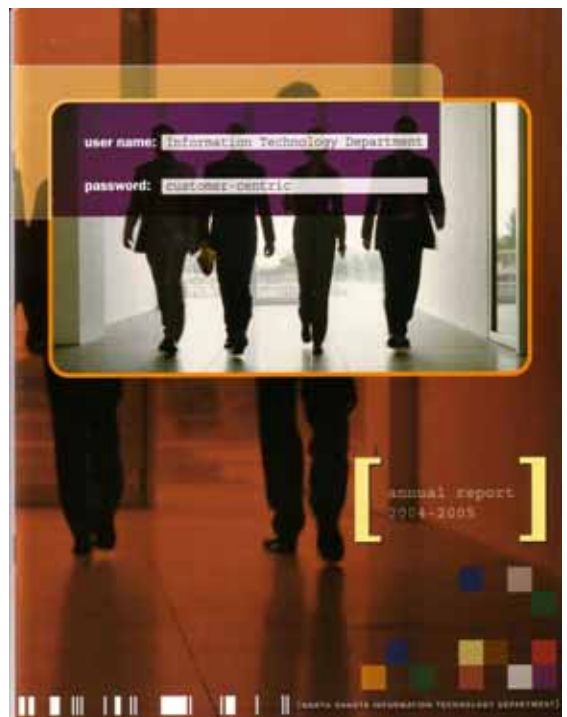
New Online Survey for Incident Management
Gary Vetter

One of the Information Technology Department's (ITD) Guiding Principles is **SERVICE**; *we hold ourselves accountable for a positive customer experience.* In order to assess our effectiveness and to identify opportunities for improvement, ITD has added a *very* brief survey to the end of its Incident Management process.

Customers are invited to provide feedback regarding their experience with incidents reported to ITD's Service Desk. The email traditionally sent upon closure of an incident now includes a link to an online survey. The questions can be answered in seconds, and they provide customers with the opportunity to comment on:

- Courtesy and Professionalism
- Skills and Knowledge
- Quality of Resolution
- Timeliness of Resolution
- Overall Experience

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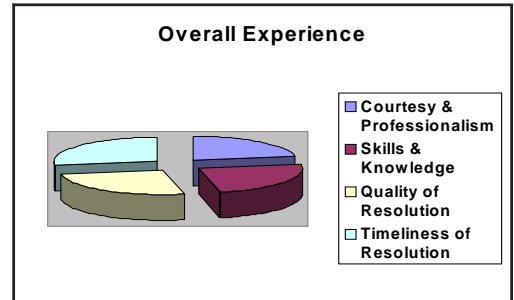
ITD is focused on being "**Customer-Centric**." An excerpt from our 2004-05 Annual Report explains what that means:

"Customer-Centric means customers are the heart of our business; our goal is to build long-term relationships and IT solutions. Customer Centric means we go beyond handling calls efficiently. It means we address all customer issues fully and resolve them completely. We are empowering employees to better understand our customer's business, take personal accountability for our customer's issues, explain solutions in layperson's terms, refer for more technical intervention as needed, and be innovative in addressing the unique business needs of each department."

Please let us know how we are doing! By participating in ITD's new survey process, your input will assist in elevating ITD to a "Best in Class" provider of service and support.

If you have any questions on the new survey process, please contact the ITD Service Desk at 701-328-4470 / 800-837-9807, or via email to itdservicedesk@state.nd.us.

Featured Links on nd.gov Portal
Vern Welder

The nd.gov portal gives state agencies the opportunity to broadcast current government information to a wide audience.

Many state agencies have already used nd.gov to feature hot topics, emergency information, and seasonal notices/promotions, etc. The Information Technology Department (ITD) invites all state agencies to suggest "Featured Links" that will give visitors fresh, relevant information about North Dakota State Government.

Please keep in mind that Featured Link space on nd.gov is limited and must be managed to meet the information needs of a majority of nd.gov's audience. Criteria for considering Featured Link requests are:

- The information submitted is *currently* a hot topic
- Relevant to a large audience
- Limited time opportunity (needs to have clear start/end dates)
- Political advertisements are not allowed

Examples of items that have been featured in the past:

- Hunting license lottery notices
- Income Tax Return information
- State Fair and Prairie Rose State Games promotions
- Legislative Session Information

To request a Featured Link for your agency, please submit a Web Change Request via the Work Management System (WMS). Include the Subject, a short Description, and the start/end Dates for the link. There is no charge for setting up a Featured Link.

Customers are likely to return to nd.gov often if we continually provide a fresh view of North Dakota State Government. Thank you in advance for providing the nd.gov audience with accurate/timely information.

If you have questions regarding Featured Links, please contact the ITD Service Desk at 701-328-4470 / 800-837-9807 or via email to itdservicedesk@state.nd.us.

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On The Job For ITD

Blake Plum, a Database Administrator (DBA) with the Information Technology Department's (ITD) Computer Systems Division, has been employed by the department for 16 ½ years. He provides database support to ITD and state agencies, which includes design, implementation, performance tuning, and maintenance. Blake also provides ALLFUSION Gen Encyclopedia Administrator support to ITD. Regarding his job duties, Blake most enjoys working with individuals to find a solution to their problems when issues arise.

Blake graduated from Dickinson State University (DSU) in 1987, with a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Computer Science and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Mathematics.

In his spare time, Blake enjoys golfing, bowling, hunting, and racquetball.

IT Planning Schedule

With a new year upon us, now is the time to start working on your agency's IT Plan. The North Dakota Century Code (NDCC) requires IT plans to be submitted to ITD by July 15, with no allowance for exceptions. ITD will be working with agencies to help guide them through the planning process throughout the coming months.

February kicks off the official planning process for most agencies. ITD will conduct planning briefings on February 2-3, February 7-8, and February 15. During these meetings, an IT business analyst will present information on Enterprise Architecture (EA) directions, ITD technology updates and budget implications, discuss ITD's projected rates, and review planning guidelines. In March and April, an analyst will meet individually with agencies to assist in the planning effort.

Planners should note there are no significant changes to the Budget and Reporting System (BARS). However, new to the system this year, agencies will be able to print out their reports from BARS. IT assets should be included in PeopleSoft. Additionally, planners must include application inventory and replacement information along with their plans. This inclusion helps assist legislators with the long-term planning of agency projects.

In July, the State Information Technology Advisory Committee (SITAC) will begin prioritizing large projects based on the Budget and Reporting System (BARS) business cases. By November, the State IT Plan and Executive recommendations will be published.

Should you have any questions about this process, please contact Jeff Swank, (701) 328-1994, or via email to jpswank@state.nd.us.

> In the coming months, ITD will be working with agencies to help guide them through the IT planning process. Final plans are due to ITD by July 15.

IT Professional Services Contract Pool

Because the State of North Dakota has an ongoing need for Information Technology (IT) professionals in a variety of categories for both project-based and staff-augmentation work, the State recently established a term contract for Information Technology professional services in 11 IT Contract Pool Categories. Multiple vendors have been awarded contracts in each of the IT Contract Pool Categories. State agencies may use a structured work order request process to obtain IT professional services through this contract.

For more information about the IT Professional Services Contract Pool, please visit http://www.state.nd.us/csd/spo/contracts/html/095.htm.

Mainframe Migration – Software Development Tool Changes
Vern Welder

After mainframe migration, our mainframe software development tools will become obsolete. TSO and the NATURAL mainframe editor will no longer be available. The software development tools we plan to use in the downsized "mainframe" environment will be Windows based. Our source code repository will also change.

TSO (Time Sharing Option) is currently our COBOL source code editor. TSO will be replaced by MicroFocus COBOL for Windows. Micro Focus COBOL is workstation based, so every COBOL developer will need a copy. We are not aware of Information Technology Department (ITD) customers that code in COBOL. Therefore, we are considering this an internal issue in regard to the mainframe migration project.

We currently use NATURAL's mainframe based editor. That will change to NATURAL for Windows, which is a concurrent-use product. ITD will host a NATURAL server that ITD developers and customers will share. These products are not yet installed, so we have not been able to determine how/if we need to charge for its use. NATURAL for Windows training will be ready for us on January 27, 2006. It is an 8-hour online class.

Our mainframe source code repository will move from Computer Associates Librarian to IBM Rational ClearCase. We currently use ClearCase Light to store and manage Client/Server and Web application code. To prepare for the increased volume of users and code, we are in the process of upgrading to the full version of ClearCase. We will be researching how customers can access their source code on a read-only basis similar to accessing source code stored on Librarian.

Our mainframe migration project managers will keep customers informed of developments in this area as needed.